

Brand Information and Consumer Responses

Supervisors: [Dr Carmen Mal](#) and [Professor Gordon Liu](#), Department of Strategy and Marketing, The Open University Business School

Project Description:

Information about brands is pervasive these days and because of such pervasiveness, its role in the formation of consumer responses and perceptions towards brands cannot be overlooked. Such information can originate from the brand itself (controllable by the brand) or from external sources (uncontrollable by the brand) e.g. customers, media. However, to ensure desirable consumer responses and perceptions towards brands (e.g. trust, loyalty etc.), it is advisable for brands to try manage such external information, particularly if it has negative connotations.

Prior research has look at various ways in which brand related information influences consumer responses and perceptions towards brands, for example:

- How different types of information, i.e. product and company related information (e.g. product quality, information about a company's socially responsible initiatives) influence consumer trust and distrust towards brands (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Aleman 2001; Kang and Hustvedt 2014; Sichtmann 2007; Singh et al. 2012; Mal et al. 2018).
- How the order in which consumers might come across information about a brand might influence consumer judgements and preference towards brands (Niedrich and Swain 2008; Kardes and Kalyanaram 1992).
- How a brand makes information available to consumers, e.g. through storytelling versus factual advertising might influence attitudes towards brands (Dessart 2018)
- How the way a brand manages a crisis and the negative information around it might influence consumers responses (Klein and Dawar 2004; Falkheimer and Heide 2015; Ahluwalia et al. 2000; Dawar and Pillutla 2000; Dawar and Lei 2009).

We welcome applications for projects that will further explore such perspectives by proposing novel approaches to the above. Methodologically, proposals with mixed methods approach are encouraged.

About the supervisors:

Carmen Mal is a Lecturer in Marketing at the Open University Business School. Her research interests include brand trust and consumer perception formation towards brands.

Gordon Liu is a Professor of Marketing Strategy at the Open University Business School. Gordon's research focuses on the intersection of marketing, strategy and entrepreneurship with particular interest in topics surrounding innovation/new product development, strategic orientation/capabilities, and network/strategic alliance.

References / readings:

- Ahluwalia, R., Burnkrany, R.E. and Unnava, H.R. (2000). Consumer response to negative publicity: the moderating role of commitment. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 37(2), pp.203–214.
- Dawar, N. and Lei, J. (2009). Brand crises: The roles of brand familiarity and crisis relevance in determining the impact on brand evaluations. *Journal of Business Research*, 62(4), pp.509–516.
- Dawar, N. and Pillutla, M. (2000). Impact of Product-Harm Crises on Brand Equity: the Moderating Role of Consumer Expectations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 37(2), pp.215–226.
- Delgado-Ballester, E. and Munuera-Aleman, J.L. (2001). Brand trust in the context of consumer loyalty. *European Journal Of Marketing*, 35(11/12), pp.1238–1258.
- Dessart, L. (2018). Do ads that tell a story always perform better? The role of character identification and character type in storytelling ads. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 35, pp.289–304.
- Falkheimer, J. and Heide, M. (2015). Trust and brand recovery campaigns in crisis: Findus Nordic and the Horsemeat Scandal. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 9(2), pp.134–147.
- Kang, J. and Hustvedt, G. (2014). Building Trust Between Consumers and Corporations: The Role of Consumer Perceptions of Transparency and Social Responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 125(2), pp.253–265.
- Kardes, F.R. and Kalyanaram, G. (1992). Order-of-entry effects on consumer memory and judgment: An information integration perspective. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 29(3), pp.343–357.
- Klein, J. and Dawar, N. (2004). Corporate social responsibility and consumers' attributions and brand evaluations in a product-harm crisis. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 21(3), pp.203–217.
- Mal, C.I., Davies, G. and Diers-Lawson, A. (2018). Through the looking glass: The factors that influence consumer trust and distrust in brands. *Psychology and Marketing*, 35(12), pp.936–947.
- Niedrich, R.W. and Swain, S.D. (2008). The effects of exposure-order and market entry-information on brand preference: A dual process model. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 36(3), pp.309–321.
- Sichtmann, C. (2007). An analysis of antecedents and consequences of trust in a corporate brand. *European Journal Of Marketing*, 41(9/10), pp.999–1015.
- Singh, J.J., Iglesias, O. and Batista-Foguet, J.M. (2012). Does Having an Ethical Brand Matter? The Influence of Consumer Perceived Ethicality on Trust, Affect and Loyalty. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 111, pp.541–549.